



**Town of Arlington, Massachusetts**  
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## **Parks and Recreation Minutes 02/03/2004**

### **Park and Recreation Commission Minutes**

#### **Architect Review Meeting**

Tuesday, February 3, 2004 - 5:00 p.m.

Approved Meeting Minutes

The meeting came to order at 5:00 PM.

*Commissioners Present:* Joseph Carabello, Thomas Caccavaro, Nancy Campbell, Leslie Mayer, and Donald Vitters

*Staff Present:* Jonathan Jalbert, Recreation Superintendent

*Recording Secretary:* Laura Munsey

*Others Present:* Mr. Gary Larson and David Fisher, Larson Associates (5:00 – 5:45 pm)

Mr. Andrew Leonard, Leonard Associates

(6:00 – 6:45 pm)

Alex Hoffinger, Friends of Waldo

Purpose of this meeting is to interview perspective Architects for Park Improvement and Renovation Projects including: Buzzell Field, Waldo Playground, Locke Playground, and Crosby Tennis Courts.

### **1. LARSON ASSOICATES**

Mr. Carabello welcomed the Park Commissioners, guests, and representatives from Larson Associates (Mr. Gary Larson, Principal and Mr. David Fisher, Landscape Architect). Mr. Vitters thanked Larson Associates for their interest in bidding on this RFP. Each Commissioner had previously been provided with a copy of Larson Associate's Proposal. Mr. Larson passed out a sketch book to each Commissioner with examples of previous projects described. Larson Associates shared and presented their preliminary analysis on each project in Arlington as presented in the RFP, and following their initial site visits.

Waldo Park Comments: Hard Surface Play Area - No definition or design elements. Slope on side of park (currently used for sledding). No separation between Basketball court and Tot Lot. Identified drainage issues (drain on road by cemetery). Would need to revitalize play structure. Park is located in a residential community. Lighting and better design would be appropriate. Initially would like to meet with Park and Recreation Commission and Neighborhood Groups to better design the space, and encourages Neighborhood input.

Crosby Tennis Courts Comments: There are 4 Courts defined by a stone retaining wall. Architects are concerned with possible underground problems, because large cracks were observed and photographed, and large areas of the asphalt had a hollow feel. This would require test bits to find out about the sub-surface condition. Only 1 catch basin was found. They feel this is a large water

shed area for only 1 catch basin. Orientation of courts is good (north/south) and pitch is sideways, which is ideal for Tennis Courts. Height of fence must be 15' high.

Buzzell Field Comments: They will be renovating the ball fields, and may look at the basketball courts. They will not be renovating the Tot Area. They have worked with Pine and Swallow in the past, and have experience with projects of this type. They will be excavating soil, installing geotech mat, drainage levels, and 6" elevation of top soil. They will meet all requirements regarding drainage. All design plans will be reviewed with Pine and Swallow. Orientation of the fields is reasonable, and there should be no need to relocate them. With a project of this nature, there may be some surprises.

Locke Playground Comments: Interesting Playground area, which has lots of potential. Would remove piece of wall to provide access, including handicap ramp. There is a gate from Parking Lot, which may belong to the Condominium. They would like to conduct a survey and work with the neighborhood to determine age group of children who will be using the park, to determine the types of structures that may be most appropriate. It is currently designed for younger children.

Schedule and Time Line for these projects will be aggressive. There are 4 different contract projects, and they are comfortable with 1 single contract or multiple contracts. They are flexible with how the Town packages these bids.

Buzzell has the longest time line, from the start of the project to when the fields would be available for use. It would be preferred if the field was not used for 1 year. Plans are to bid in April of 2004. Begin Construction the 1st of May. Complete in August. Growing season into Spring of 2005.

Locke and Waldo could be bid as 1 project. Waldo Time Frame: survey design through April (specifics regarding programs, noise, lights, drainage, safety, access, and options). Bid in May. Project would require a couple of months for construction.

Crosby Tennis Courts Time Frame: Could repave and resurface and complete by end of the summer.

Locke and Waldo will require more design aspects. Buzzell and Crosby will not require design, but will be more technical in nature.

Concerns were raised regarding the design costs for Waldo because a percentage of the funding is contingent upon a favorable vote by town meeting. Larson Associates is aware of this issue, and can design to the anticipated funding at the time, and have contingency schematics available, which can be put on hold if necessary. Ms. Mayer expressed concern that Arlington may no longer qualify for CDBG funds because it does not meet the population requirements.

Mr. Hoffinger of the Friends of Waldo Playground inquired about working with Neighborhood Groups. Larson Associates stated they are committed to working with Neighborhood Groups, and will have an initial meeting with them to understand concerns, desires, ideas, and work on concept sketches, with an eye toward budget and programs. They will continue to work throughout the entire process with these neighborhood groups. Larson Associates is located in Arlington and they would be available to meet after hours if necessary, or in their office. Ultimately however, all plans must be approved by the Park and Recreation Commissioners.

Mr. Caccavaro asked about Larson's percentage of Change orders on past projects and staff availability. On average Larson indicated they experience about a 2% difference in change orders. Cost control change orders are minimal and they hold to a tight set of drawings and specifications. They currently have 4 full time staff members.

Ms. Mayer and Mr. Carabello asked how they will oversee the construction projects. Larson Associates stated they will meet prior to the start of the project, and will meet once per week and for a review the materials ordered and received, and will stay on top of the construction project through its entirety. They are not however a "clerk of the works", and it would be the towns decision whether to hire a "clerk of the works" or if a town employee may be assigned. Larson Associates stated they will be responsive. Certificates for soils are required, however they would also recommend a testing agency be hired to test for proper soils.

Larson Associates completed their presentation at 5:55 pm.

## **2. LEONARD ASSOICATES**

Mr. Carabello welcomed Mr. Andrew Leonard of Leonard Associates. Mr. Vitters thanked Mr. Leonard for his interest in bidding on this RFP. Each member of the Parks and Recreation Commission had received the Proposal.

Mr. Leonard stated he is a resident of Arlington and has lived here since 1982. He has a long history in working on Park and Recreational Projects and has done so for the last 10 years. He was the design architect for the Maryanne Greeley Playground located at Stratton School. On this Phase 1 project, two distinct play areas were designed, one specified for tots. Additionally Mr. Leonard has been involved in many different projects in town. Some projects have been bid together, and others separately.

Mr. Leonard worked on Magnolia Field, North Union (play area, baseball and softball field, and the spray pool), and Spy Pond Field. He was involved in installation of an irrigation system at Scannell, and Thorndike. Mr. Leonard was involved in the renovation of Crosby. Modification were made in response to neighborhood concerns. He also worked on the Robbins Farm Master Plan and the Radcliffe Design. He met with neighborhood groups, and helped incorporate their plans into the masterplan.

At Parallell Playground, Cutter School, he worked on the layout of playground. Thorndike was the largest single intense project in town, due to the flood plain and flood control and mitigation to correct the drainage, which Mr. Leonard reported is holding up well, due to the rotation of fields and rest they are receiving.

Mr. Leonard has worked on a variety of other Projects and Senior Housing Centers, including Sunrise where and he worked closely with the Redevelopment Authority. He also worked on Youville Place in Lexington, to incorporate gathering places for the residents, and has worked on Urban Development projects in Brookline, which had intense Zoning Laws. In Winchester Mr. Leonard worked on Mullen Field, across from St. Eulalia, and Leonard Field on Washington Street. All of these projects involved neighborhood input, and he has worked with Present and former Superintendents of Recreation within Arlington, and with the Arlington Department of Public Works. Mr. Leonard stated he is familiar with the demands on fields in Arlington, and will work to coordinate these projects to hopefully minimize the effects of the shutdowns.

Mr. Leonard shared his preliminary analysis on each project as presented in the RFP.

In response to scheduling, Mr. Leonard stated Buzzell field will take the longest. The field should be shut down for at least 2 seasons, and may possibly need to be shut down for up to 1 year. Growing season is best in the fall. He anticipates a start date of August 15<sup>th</sup>, with the field seeded by the end of September, or Sod by October. Buzzell field should not present too many neighborhood issues. Topographic surveys and soil testing can't be done until the thaw. Pierce Field at Arlington High School will be closed down, and Buzzell may be needed. Reeds Brook (McClennan Fields) should be open by Fall of 05.

Renovation of Crosby Tennis courts. Research has already been done, and these will need to be rebuild, not repaired.

Locke and Waldo should take between 6-8 weeks each and could be fall projects, so they are ready for the Spring. Both these projects will involve Neighborhood input, and he is happy to work with these neighborhood groups. Mr. Leonard stated he lives locally and can meet on an ad-hoc basis. There will be a meeting with the Park Commissioners and Neighborhood Committees on-

site to discuss what is desired. An eye will be kept on budget constraints, when evaluating different desires. Sketches and a possible layout will be prepared. As designs are refined, a private meeting, and then a public meeting will be scheduled. The fee for designing of projects is a lump sum.

Mr. Leonard stated that he will be flexible with scheduling, and work with Town to decide what works best. The projects can be grouped any way the town likes.

Mr. Caccavaro inquired about the number of employees in the Company. Mr. Leonard replied he is the sole employee, and stated he has been the sole practitioner since 1991 and managed all his projects independently. He stated that the Town of Arlington Projects will be his first priority, and he will always be available to work with and talk with Town regarding these projects.

Mr. Carabello asked how he will oversee the construction projects. Mr. Leonard suggested he will hold weekly meetings with the Contractor, DPW, Superintendent of Recreation, and Commissioner, to review the work. The Soil Contractor would provide certs with the delivery of the soils. An independent contractor could be hired to oversee specific materials received, or a representative from the DPW or Engineering Department, could be used.

Mr. Leonard completed his presentation at 6:45 pm.

The Park Commissioners discussed both presentations, and were impressed with both Bidders. They also feel both firms were qualified based on the presentations and past projects completed. The Commissioners stated they wanted to be sure the firm had the man-power to successfully manage all of the projects and wanted to go with an aggressive schedule. The commission would also like to further discuss the possibility of hiring a clerk of the works, or decide who should be watching over these projects, and requests that this issue be placed on the agenda for a future meeting.

MOTION (made by Thomas Caccavaro, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Nancy Campbell)

THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION AWARDS THE CONTRACT TO LARSON ASSOCIATES FOR THE WORK STATED IN THE RFP FOR BUZZELL FIELD, CROSBY TENNIS COURTS, WALDO PARK, AND LOCKE PLAYGROUND.

VOTE UNANIMOUS (5-0) IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION

**Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 pm**